

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Final Office Action mailed November 9, 2009. At the time of the Final Office Action, Claims 1-10 were pending in this Application. Claims 1-10 were rejected. Applicants have herein amended Claims 1 and 5 to incorporate the limitations of dependent Claims 3 and 7, respectively. Because the combination of limitations recited in amended Claims 1 and 5 were previously presented (as dependent Claims 3 and 7, the amendments do not raise new issues or require a new search, and thus should be entered by the Examiner. Dependent Claims 3 and 7 are herein cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3, 5-7, and 9 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,279,842 issued to Byron Spain ("*Spain*").

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Furthermore, "the identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co. Ltd.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 U.S.P.Q.2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

As discussed above, Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 5 to incorporate the limitations of previously presented (now cancelled) dependent Claims 3 and 7. Applicants respectfully submit that *Spain* does not teach all elements of amended independent Claims 1 and 5, as well as independent Claim 9, and thus cannot anticipate such claims.

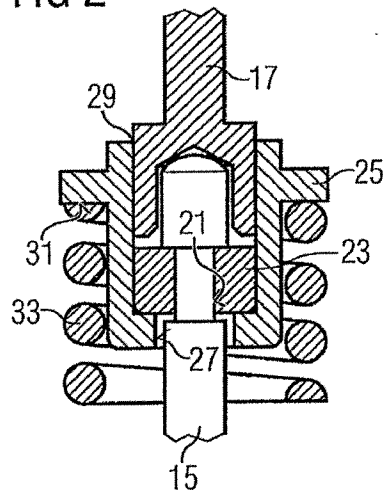
For example, amended Claim 1 recites:

wherein a receptance is formed in the first part and fixes a keeper in axial direction relative to the needle, and a ***coupling body***, which has a recess, through which the first part protrudes and which ***takes in the keeper and fixes it in the radial direction relative to the needle*** and with the coupling body being joined to the second part

Independent Claims 5 and 9 recite similar limitations.

Thus, Claim 1 requires a coupling body that “*takes in the keeper and fixes it in the radial direction relative to the needle.*” This feature is shown, for example, in Applicants’ Figure 2. As shown, the outer surface of keeper 23 fits snugly within the inner surface of coupling body 25, which acts to fix keeper 23 in the radial direction.

FIG 2



Spain does not teach this feature. The Examiner alleges that *Spain* teaches a coupling body (plunger 98) and a keeper (nut 110). Figure 2C of *Spain* illustrates these components. As shown below, nut 110 is *spaced apart* from the plunger 98. Thus, plunger 98 cannot *fix nut 110 in any radial direction*, as required in independent Claims 1, 5, and 9.

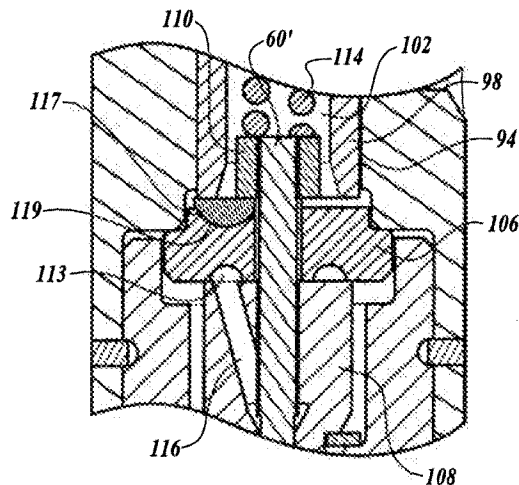


Fig. 2C

Therefore, *Spain* does not teach all limitations of independent Claims 1, 5, and 9, and thus cannot anticipate Claims 1, 5, and 9. Thus, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1, 5, and 9, as well as all claims that depend therefrom.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Dependent Claims 4, 8, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Spain* in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0043575 filed by Atsushi Sekine et al. ("*Sekine*").

Dependent Claims 4, 8, and 10 are allowable at least because they depend from independent Claims 1, 5, and 9, shown above to be allowable. Further, *Sekine* does not teach the limitations of independent Claims 1, 5, and 9 not taught by *Spain*.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of dependent Claims 4, 8, and 10.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest effort to place this case in condition for allowance in light of the remarks set forth above. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending claims.

Applicants believe there are no fees due at this time. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees necessary or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-4871 of King & Spalding L.L.P.

If there are any matters concerning this Application that may be cleared up in a telephone conversation, please contact Applicants' attorney at 512.457.2030.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: January 11, 2010

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